It’s a great time to be at Kent State

Right now, the Kent State University family has a front-row seat to the most exciting transformations in university history.

The construction of new buildings, facility upgrades and establishment of dynamic, new spaces are all in progress with the goal of creating the most outstanding academic experience for students, faculty, staff, alumni and the greater community enriched by this institution.

The university is experiencing a period of unprecedented growth and our physical facilities are growing, to accommodate larger enrollments, as well as expanded institutional goals. Maintenance deferred on aging buildings will continue to elevate the campus as a whole.

Building a better campus also helps Kent State remain competitive in the higher-education market by attracting high-quality students and experienced faculty, as well as funds for vital research.

Changes on campus are mirrored in the incredible renaissance of downtown Kent, strengthening our town-gown relationship and creating the enriching experience of a rising college town.

Now is the time to create the state-of-the-art academic environment to meet the needs and expectations of the 21st-century student.

Message from the President

In recent years, Kent State University has been widely recognized as one of the world’s finest public research universities and as an institution that is helping Northeast Ohio compete and succeed. As we look to the future, our academic community is committed to maintaining — and raising — the high standards of scholarship and service we have set for ourselves. As part of this “excellence agenda,” the university has embarked on a major, multifaceted initiative to make each of our eight campuses everything a world-class, 21st-century campus should be — for the sake of our students, faculty and staff, and the many other stakeholders who count on Kent State every day.

During the next four years, we will transform our campuses with new buildings and revitalized classroom, laboratory, studio, performance, living and studying spaces. Without exception, these projects will support Kent State’s top priorities: academic excellence and the success of all students. In turn, they will keep Kent State a leader in campus safety, accessibility and sustainability, and will serve as a powerful magnet for top students, employees and partners in areas from economic development to community service.

The exciting developments on our campuses mirror the exciting projects underway in the city of Kent and in many communities served by our Regional Campuses. When our capital plans are realized, we will be able to say that Kent State was part of an investment in the future totaling nearly $800 million; helped create nearly 1,000 jobs; and improved the quality of life in Northeast Ohio.

I’m enormously proud to be part of a community that is making such meaningful contributions to a regional renaissance. And I’m truly excited to be part of a university that is taking charge of its future at this pivotal point in its history.

Lester A. Lefton
Areas of Transformation

Our commitment to build the future and create a foundation of excellence is reflected in this investment of nearly a billion dollars dedicated to improving the quality of the living and learning environment throughout Kent State University’s eight-campus system.

Momentum – Building on recently completed projects

Current and future projects build upon strong momentum created by these vibrant, recent additions to our eight-campus system. They are vital assets to our university and the communities they serve.

Tuscarawas Performing Arts Center

Completed and formally opened in 2010, the spectacular Performing Arts Center includes a 1,100-seat theatre, classrooms, rehearsal rooms and conference areas. The theatre is a premiere venue for traveling Broadway shows, concerts, lectures and other types of entertainment. The center enriches the campus’s academic and cultural programs, community cultural organizations and the economic development of the Tuscarawas Valley.

College of Podiatric Medicine

A collaboration in excellence, the former Ohio College of Podiatric Medicine in Independence, Ohio, became part of the Kent State University family in 2012. The esteemed institution, founded in 1916, is one of nine accredited podiatry colleges in the United States and is a four-year, graduate-level medical college, granting the degree of Doctor of Podiatric Medicine. Currently, the Kent State University College of Podiatric Medicine maintains an average four-year school enrollment of 425 students and typically graduates 85-100 podiatrists a year.

Roe Green Performing Arts Center

Opened in 2010, RSS Roe Green Center includes the striking new glass lobby entrance for the Music and Speech Center and a 13,000-square-foot, flexible seating black box theatre, as well as three new dance studios, a lighting laboratory, props and crafts lab, workshops and classrooms, a recording studio, a costume shop, performance support space and a welding lab.

Ashtabula Medical Health Center

Dedicated in 2010, the 50th anniversary year of Kent State University at Ashtabula, the cutting-edge Robert S. Morrison Health and Science Building will help produce professionals to fill the need for healthcare professionals in Northeast Ohio. State-of-the-art technology includes a human patient simulator that reacts to medical and nursing interventions, a modern nursing lab and general classrooms, physical and occupational therapy labs, a respiratory therapy lab and a full-scale apartment for the practice of in-home therapies.

Risman Plaza

The dynamic renovation of Risman Plaza in Central Campus included completion of the new fountain, seat walls, raised planters, a new sculpture and a new transit shelter. Other improvements included enhanced lighting, new walkways and brick pavers. The transformation of Risman Plaza continues in conjunction with the development of the new Student Green.

Refresh – Reinventing spaces for exceptional environments learning

Renovations, enhancements and new facilities will provide modern, state-of-the-art classrooms and specialized learning facilities. These are essential tools in keeping students’ knowledge up-to-date and keeping Kent State students on par with students across the country.

Sciences

Recognizing the vital importance of the science disciplines, the university has made renovations and improvements to the Science hall on the Kent Campus a top priority.
• Renovations to Cunningham Hall (biological sciences), Smith Hall (physics) and Williams Hall (chemistry)

These improvements will provide numerous benefits to the undergraduate and graduate student body through modern, upgraded facilities that will allow students to maintain a state-of-the-art learning experience.

Art

The art program operates in six different buildings, across the Kent Campus. As part of a university initiative to consolidate the program and improve facilities, renovations to the Art Building and the Art Annex are a top priority.

Undergraduate Studies

Offices and operations of Undergraduate Studies can be found across the Kent Campus, but the primary location is in Olson Center, adjacent to the Memorial Athletic and Convocation Center ACC and along the Kent State University Esplanade. In order to better leverage this prime location, and enhance recruitment and retention, look for renovation of this facility.

Deferred Maintenance

Funding has been reserved to address critical improvements throughout the Kent Campus. These projects will address roofing, windows and masonry issues in academic buildings including:
• University Library
• Taylor Hall
• McGilvrey Hall
• Cartwright Hall

ADA Upgrades

As part of the university’s continuous efforts to make the Kent campus welcoming and accessible to everyone, funding has been designated for ADA improvements.

Growth – New places that advance student success

Essential in keeping pace with growing enrollment and anticipating future growth new construction projects on campus provide contemporary, high-tech facilities for learning, study and research. State-of-the-art settings also help Kent State attract and retain the best and brightest students, faculty and researchers.

Student Green

Extending from the recently renovated Risman Plaza to the lawn area south, creating a contiguous green space to Summit Street, the Student Green will create an attractive, student-centered space at a major “front door” to the Kent Campus. It will include a performance stage that is intended to support student use. The stage will project back into Central Campus with the new Student Green area and the Kent Student Center serving as a backdrop.

Architecture

Currently, this signature program is housed in three, separate structures. To unite these components, plans are underway for construction of a new building. The proposed facility celebrates this outstanding program, as well as helping enhance retention and recruitment. The planned location (along the new Kent State University Esplanade extension) is designed to energize the surrounding business district and increase student traffic in this new section of the Kent Campus.

Science

Included in the funding that has been set aside for the sciences is the construction of a new multidisciplinary research facility in the Science Hall. Upgraded research facilities enhance the university’s ability to maintain high-quality faculty, attract grants and conduct vital research.

Technology

Technology is another discipline in which state-of-the-art facilities are essential to providing optimum academic experiences. In order to provide greatly improved facilities for the College of Applied Engineering, Sustainability and Technology and plan for future growth, funding has been designated for construction of a new building, designed to include empty shelved areas to accommodate expansion.
Science and Nursing Building at Kent State University at Stark

Planned in response to the continuing expansion of the nursing and science programs at Kent State University at Stark, this state-of-the-art building will include classrooms, lecture halls, laboratories and faculty offices associated with the biology, physics, geology and nursing programs. The project also will include renovation of approximately 5,250 square feet of the existing Main Hall East Wing, as well as limited site improvements and parking enhancements.

Tolloty Center at Kent State University at Trumbull

The Eugene Tolloty Technology Center Incubator has been designed to support entrepreneurial efforts with dedicated business incubator space for start-up companies linked to high-tech research, development and intellectual property enterprises.

Regional Academic Center in Twinsburg

To better serve the region with increased capacity and to offer additional programs, including executive-level training, the new Kent State University Regional Academic Center offers state-of-the-art classrooms, technology, science and medical laboratories.

Renovation/Improvement

State-funded capital has been designated for improvements to Kent State’s Regional Campuses. Additional funds have been earmarked for lecture hall improvements to Kent State Trumbull.

Energy Conservation

HB 251 sets a goal of 20 percent energy use reduction and avoidance of greenhouse gas emissions. Kent State conservation projects will meet or exceed these goals through improvements to residence halls, classroom and auxiliary buildings and utility assets. These conservation measures will also realize significant savings in annual energy costs.

Water Conservation

Low-flow sink aerators and showerheads have been installed in campus residence halls to help effectively manage and conserve water usage on campus.

Solar Power

A large, solar photovoltaic panel system on the roof of the Field House will provide more than one-third of the energy for the Field House and Dix Stadium. This project will serve as a model for other proposed solar panels to be installed on Kent Campus roofs, as well as for other state of Ohio public institutions.

HVAC Efficiency

Mechanical and structural improvements, including replacement of air handlers, motors and pumps, upgrades to roofs and building envelopes, new windows and smart thermostats will improve comfort and save money through increased heating and cooling efficiency.

LEED

All construction and renovation projects on all campuses will be certified at the USGBC LEED Silver level or above.

An Impressive Investment in Northeast Ohio

Kent State University Hotel and Conference Center

Created through a partnership between the Kent State University Foundation and the Pizzuti Companies of Columbus, Ohio, the new Kent State University Hotel and Conference Center will serve the university and the community. It will have 95 rooms, 5,400 square feet for meeting space, an indoor pool and an exercise room.

Synergy – university and community working together to move forward

The spirit of public-private partnership has never been more alive than in the recent collaborations between Kent State University and the city of Kent.

Kent Central Gateway Project

Working with state and city officials, university representatives helped lobby for the $20 million TIGER grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation that will fund the revitalization and redevelopment of Kent as a transportation gateway. This project includes the construction of a multimodal PARTA facility that will serve as a transportation hub for buses, cars, bicycles and pedestrians.

University Hotel and Conference Center

Created through a partnership between the Kent State University Foundation and the Pizzuti Companies of Columbus, Ohio, the new

Conserve – Fostering a sustainable future

The university has a large responsibility – and opportunity for leadership – in building a sustainable and energy efficient-environment. Benefits include increased comfort, cost savings and reduced environmental impact. Major projects are already underway.

Enrich – Focal points of excellence in Northeast Ohio Regional Campuses

New buildings and improvements in progress or planned for Kent State’s Regional Campuses and beyond include:

- Science and Nursing
- Tolloty Center at Kent State University at Trumbull
- Regional Academic Center in Twinsburg
- Renovation/Improvement

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Be Part Of The Transformation!
You can keep up with all the latest projects around campus through a special Foundations of Excellence website.